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SUBJECT: DAILY IRAQI WEBSITE MONITORING - October 5, 2005

SUMMARY: Discussions of the referendum, the Iraqi Interior Minister's statements, and frustration with Sunni Arabs were the major editorial themes of Iraqi, Arabic language websites on October 5, 2005. END SUMMARY.

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SELECTED COMMENTARIES

- [1A.](#) "A Movie Theater"
(Editorial by Fatih Abdul Salam - Iraq 4 All News -
<http://iraq4all.org/viewnews.php?id=10213>)

"I have always wondered about many questions concerning the same basic idea, which might seem too late to consider. But in Iraq, where crises interact, there is no harm in broaching an idea late, as long as it concerns the most significant political issue in the country. These above-mentioned questions center on the following:

"The parliament is transitional, the government transitional, the presidency transitional, resolutions transitional, and everyone is waiting for elections to provide a permanent parliament and government. How can we demand that a transitional period must result in a permanent constitution? Why can't Iraq be patient enough to wait two more months when a permanent parliament will follow from the elections, and then we can start drafting a permanent constitution? Besides, who can point out one Iraqi outside of the political scene who respects any sacred date that politicians usually worship?

"Another question: Why do we describe the constitution as permanent instead of using the mere phrase 'the Iraqi constitution' since nothing written in the document is permanent, and everything could be subject to modification?

"Politicians should take a minute to think about answers to the questions they do not like, because these answers could be the means for alleviating tension and reconnecting broken bonds among sectors of society that feel cut off from the new life. Some try to portray this as a life where access is granted to those with reservations only, as if we were at a theater . maybe we are."

- [1B.](#) "To the Minister of Interior: Iraq's Interests Should Come First"
(Editorial by Muaid Abdul Satar - Sawt Al-Iraq - "Voice of Iraq" - <http://www.sotaliraq.com/articles-iraq/nieuws.php?id=16781>)

"The statements of the Iraqi Interior Minister, Baqir Jabr Al-Zubaidi, have created widespread discontent among Arab media outlets and Arab politicians in Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries. If anyone is searching for political hot topics, then the minister's statements are the best sources. Additionally, anyone seeking to offend Iraq's neighbors will find a great deal of help in the minister's statements. I cannot understand how the minister lost his temper and spoke such severe words that undermine the people of a neighboring country, especially since the most important qualities required of a minister are to demonstrate wisdom and courtesy.

"I felt sorry for our respectable minister. It never occurred to me that he would be capable of offending a neighboring country with such words. The minister would have been better off inviting the Saudi minister to his ministry, or even to his home, and demonstrating to him through calm discussion, the consequences of his [the Saudi minister's] statements. He could let the Saudi minister in on facts about which he is unaware, in order to dispel any fears. If the minister cannot follow these rules, then he should not have been appointed as a minister; maybe another job would

have been more suitable. Ministries follow rules, and these rules should be observed.

"It might be a little harsh if I were to demand that the National Assembly summon the minister for questioning and demand an apology for such statements. But I would like to say that political parties should reconsider their nominees for government posts because our nation can no longer bear the consequences of additional mistakes. I am trying to imagine what the situation would be like if our minister of interior would attend a meeting of interior ministers in Riyadh or Jeddah, or even if the minister wanted to go on pilgrimage to Mecca.

"Mistakes at senior posts have serious repercussions, with national and personal consequences. That is why ministers are cautioned not to offend anyone, even their opponents-except for former regime ministers who had their own rules to follow, and hopefully that era has ended."

1C. "The End of Iraq's Unity"

(Editorial by Baha'a Sabeeh Al Faili - Nahrain - "Two Rivers" -

http://www.nahrain.com/d/news/05/10/04/nhr010_4z.html)

"There is not a clear understanding of Sunni demands for changes or reforms in writing the constitution. When I heard such demands I thought I was listening to a joke. I cannot imagine a criminal asking a judge in a courtroom to change his verdict, but it is possible for the judge to set conditions based on which the criminal can be set free.

"The brothers of Sunni Arabs destroyed all ties with other Iraqis when they allied with Saddam and allowed themselves to be weapons that Saddam used to hit the people. I do not believe they can deny that they harbor terrorists coming from overseas. Many Ba'athist terrorists and infidels are among them; hence, the equation cannot be solved the way they want.

"They ought to listen to and implement our conditions if they really want to stay with us! We will not stay with them! .Our conditions are logical and we have the right to demand them to keep our people safe. Our conditions are:

- "1). Brothers of Sunnis Arab should no longer look at other Iraqi people arrogantly.
- "2). They should turn in all the terrorists who harbored them.
- "3). They should turn in the Ba'athists who committed crimes against Iraqi people.
- "4). They should not demand cancellation of the law that excludes Ba'athists.
- "5). They should vote for the constitution.

"Those are the conditions that should be met so we can think about forgiving the damned past and granting them another chance, because we are at a crossroads and we might never meet again."

1D. "It's Neither the Right Time, Nor the Right Place"

(Editorial by Ja'afar Mohammed Ahmed - Independent Iraqi News Agency - <http://www.normal.iraq-ina.com/showarticles.php?id=1442>)

"The emerging differences among Iraqi leaders and the public statements that strongly criticize Saudi Arabia are inappropriate-inappropriate at this time, in this place, inappropriate for Iraq and for its peoples' interests. We are at the threshold of a referendum battle and the start of the former Iraqi president's trial. The number of suicide operations has escalated and there are fierce military attacks launched by the American occupation forces in Western Iraq.

"The outburst of the crisis between Iraqi president Jalal Talabani and Prime Minister Ibrahim Al Ja'fari was expected because of 'hidden differences' between them since the time when the interim government was formed. But what attracted our attention was that the escalation of these differences took place at a very critical time for the two parties-less than two weeks before the constitutional referendum.

"The exciting thing is that during a meeting attended by Talabani, Kurdistan Regional President Masoud Barazani, and U.S. Ambassador to Iraq Zalmay Khalilzad in Salahuddin province, President Talabani explicitly accused the Prime Minister of violating articles of the agreement between the Kurdish List and the United Iraqi Alliance. The parliament did well when they decided to solve the crisis by hosting Talabani and Ja'fari in a candid and transparent session to reach a solution that would satisfy all parties.

"The Iraqi escalation vis--vis Saudi Arabia following Foreign Minister Saud Al Faisal's warnings of external interference in Iraq was not good timing. It was a strongly

worded critique by Interior Minister Bayan Jabr Solag against Saudi Arabia. It would not be said to a true neighboring country that cares about maintaining Iraq's Arab identity, unity, and stability. Unfortunately, the criticism coincided with the Committee of Arab Ministers meeting that was supposed to set a strategy to support and rebuild Iraq.

"Iraq now is facing the threat of civil war and sectarian discord; its people are living a troubled fate and they need the support of their brothers in this period."

KHALILZAD